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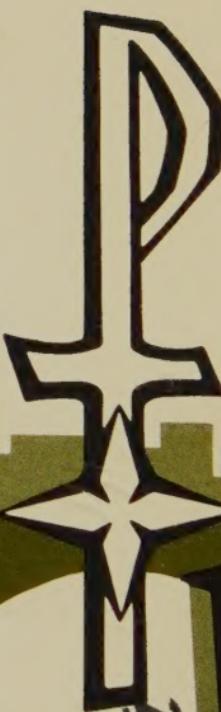
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Jesus said : short meditations for the c



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LUTHERAN SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AT CHICAGO

JESUS SAID:

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SHORT MEDITATIONS FOR THE CONFIRMED

TRANSLATED FROM THE SWEDISH OF
HARALD ÖRTENBLAD

BY
THE REV. C. E. HOFFSTEN, B. D.

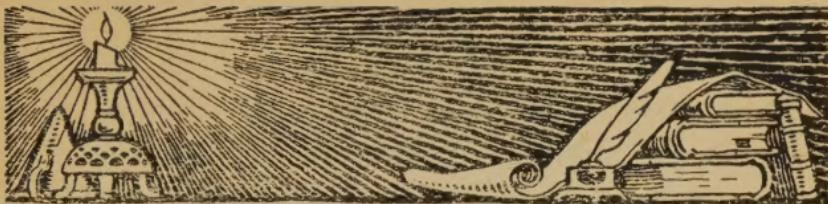
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I.

THE WORDS OF JESUS.

Jesus said:

If ye continue in my word, then are ye disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. John 8: 31, 32.

The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. John 6: 63.

If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. John 8: 51.

Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. Luke 21: 33.

Such is the value that Jesus places on his words. You earnestly desire to become a follower of Christ; then you should hold fast to his Word. For this reason you must know his Word. It is found in your Bible; therefore read your Bible. A true follower of Jesus reads his Bible often, not only now and then.

Let me advise you as to how you should use your Bible.

Read your Bible every day. Let no day pass without reading the Word of God.

Read your Bible at stated times, for instance, on arising.

Read your Bible consecutively, a chapter, a half chapter, or it may be but a few verses, at a time.

If your Bible reading is not regular, there is great danger that it will soon cease.

Combine your Bible reading with prayer. Pray before you read and pray after you have read.

Read your Bible and obey. Otherwise your Bible reading will be of no value. Obey at once. If you delay there is danger of all coming to naught.

Let not that which you do not understand disturb you, for you will always find some word which you will understand, and which will reach your heart. Let that word speak.

The time for your confirmation and your first communion is approaching. At such a time many questions arise in the soul, questions concerning God and eternity, concerning happiness in life and everlasting salvation. Who is better able to answer such questions than he who calls himself the Way, the Truth and the Life? Does it not seem altogether natural that at this time there should awaken within your heart a desire to pass some quiet moments alone with your God? For such a time perhaps one of the following meditations will be fitting.

Why is it so important that we hold fast to the Word of Jesus? In answer we would say that there is much indeed in this world that tends to take

possession of us, ensnare and destroy us. But the words of Jesus breathe life and spirit. We need something to raise us above the world. Without the Word of Jesus we sink down into the world and become the slaves of riches, of worldly honor, and of the lust of the flesh (1 John 2: 16). Through the words of Jesus we find the truth, the truth that makes us free. All about us in the world there is misery, sorrow, fear, anxiety, and at last, death.

But the words of Jesus give comfort; he who keeps his Word shall not taste of death.

Let us hold fast to the words of Jesus; they abide when all else shall pass away.

O Word of God Incarnate,
O Wisdom from on high,
O Truth unchanged, unchanging
O Light of our dark sky;
We praise Thee for the radiance
That from the hallowed page,
A lantern to our footsteps,
Shines on from age to age.

W. W. How.



2.

YOUR BAPTISM.

Jesus said:

Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. John 3: 3, 5, 6.

*Y*ou have been baptized. God's Spirit then came over you. The baptismal water represents the Spirit and imparts the Spirit. The visible element in Baptism is the water. The invisible heavenly gift of grace is the Spirit.

Water cleanses us; water gives life; without it we should die. This represents what Baptism accomplishes: it cleanses and gives life.

Baptism cleanses from sin. Ananias, therefore, says to the penitent soul: "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins" (Acts 22: 16). And

Peter says to the people who had been pricked in their heart by his sermon: "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2: 38). Baptism would give them the gift of the Holy Ghost and the forgiveness of sins, i. e., cleansing from sin.

Baptism likewise gives life. "Therefore", writes Paul, "we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in the newness of life" (Rom. 6: 4).

A seed is buried in the ground to die. It is quickened by the moisture and nourishment in the earth so that a new plant arises. In Baptism we are enveloped by the Spirit, and the Spirit gives new life. In this way Baptism gives life.

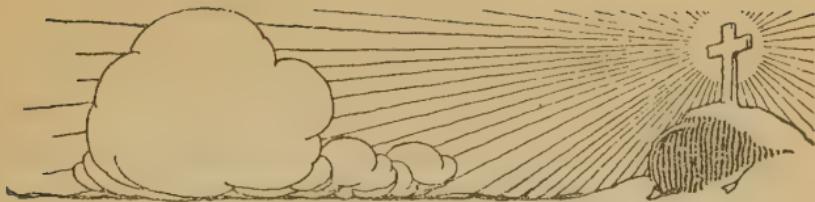
Baptism gives life. "God saved us", says Paul, "by the washing of regeneration", i. e., through Baptism. In Baptism there was a renewing of the Holy Ghost, which God so abundantly shed on us (Tit. 3: 5-8). God's Spirit, that was shed on us in Baptism, regenerates us, i. e., makes us into new beings. Therefore Baptism is called the washing of regeneration, for it brings about the regeneration of the baptized. This is the work of the Holy Ghost. Therefore Baptism gives life.

You have been baptized. You may also become pure and receive new life. To this end God's Spirit has ever been active within you since your Baptism. You were received into the Christian Church,

where God's Spirit, through the Word and the sacraments, penetrates your heart to transform and renew it. Withstand not the Spirit! Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; only he that has become cleansed and regenerated by the Spirit, he that is born of the Spirit, is meet to dwell in the world of the Spirit. He alone can see the kingdom of God: he alone is worthy to enter the Ever-lasting Glory.

Baptized into Thy Name most holy,
O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
I claim a place, though weak and lowly,
Among Thy seed and chosen host;
"Buried with Christ, and dead to sin,
Thy Spirit now shall live within."

Johann Jacob Rambach.



3.

IN THE ARMS OF JESUS.

Jesus said:

Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. Mark 10: 14, 15.

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you! and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.
Matth. 28: 18-20.

You have been baptized. Jesus took you up in his arms and you entered into the kingdom of God, for he that is in the arms of Jesus, is likewise in his Father's kingdom.

Jesus is present at each baptism. This he has

promised. When the disciples of Jesus baptized, they simply complied with his command, and performed the act for Jesus. We may therefore say that Jesus himself meets us in Baptism. It is he who baptizes (John 4: 1, 2). It is he who receives the children of men into the kingdom of God. What a blessed thought that Jesus himself has baptized you!

Jesus wishes to receive the nations into God's kingdom, not only the individuals of the nation, but the entire nation. The nations should be baptized. He bade his disciples to make all nations his disciples, and this was to be accomplished by Baptism and teaching.

When, then, is a nation a disciple of Jesus? It is when the people are baptized and taught to observe all things that Jesus has commanded. Our nation is also a Christian nation. The majority of our people have been baptized into the name of the Triune God, and are taught in many ways in home and church to observe what Jesus has commanded. We may therefore say that our nation is a disciple of Jesus and belongs to God's kingdom and is under the influence of the Holy Ghost.

No one in the nation should be excluded. Jesus wishes to have all with him, the whole nation is to be a disciple of the Lord. Therefore we baptize the little children, therefore we give instruction in Christianity. He who withholds Baptism from the infant takes a stand against the command of Jesus and against his will. Little children have

a right to be received into God's kingdom, for of such is the kingdom of God.

You are baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. That indicates that you belong to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that God belongs to you (Cf. 1 Cor. 10: 3, Israel was baptized unto Moses). You are sealed with the name of the Triune God and have part therefore in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost (2 Cor. 13: 13).

You have been baptized. You were then received into the kingdom of God. Since then you have been instructed in the gospel of Jesus. The Holy Spirit has been poured over you abundantly, to make you pure and give you life and transform you into a new creature.

Purity and life, should you not long for these gifts?

Suffer little children to come unto me,
For of such shall ever Heaven's kingdom be,
So spake Christ, the Master, lovingly and mild
Laid His hand in blessing on a little child,
Suffer little children Christ's elect to be,
And in Heaven's kingdom Christ, the Lord, to see.

Rudolph A. John.



4.

OUR HEAVENLY FATHER.

Jesus said:

When ye pray, say, Our Father, which art in heaven. Luke 11: 2.

Take no thought saying: What shall we eat, or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. Matth. 6: 31, 32.

*Y*ou have been baptized. Jesus took you up in his arms, heaven was opened over you and a voice from heaven said: "This is my beloved son, my beloved daughter". You were in the bosom of Jesus and he gave you the right to call God your Father.

Jesus has revealed God to the world (John 1: 18; John 17: 6). No sinful being can by his own reason or strength believe that God in heaven loves him as his own child. The patriarchs of the Old Testament were indeed encouraged and comfort-

ed with the thought that God was as merciful as a father (Ps. 103), but they did not call him Father, and dared not term themselves the children of God. For their God was the Lord, and they were the servants.

God is a Father that so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3: 16). This is the precious gospel message of Jesus to the world.

Jesus would lead us to believe in the Father. To believe in him is to trust in him, to be assured that he loves us, in order that we may be happy in his love and confidently entrust ourselves in his care, that he may do with us as he will.

God is my Father. He has given me life, without which other gifts here upon earth are worthless. He has given me body and soul. He has supplied my body with these precious limbs, eyes, ears, etc., each of which is a marvelous creation. He has endowed my soul with reason and wonderful faculties. The significance of these gifts is felt when we consider the condition of persons who have been deprived of any of them: the blind, the deaf, the dumb, the crippled, the insane.

God is my Father. He daily provides abundantly for all my wants. As a child I may be without anxiety, nor wonder what I shall eat, drink, or with what I shall clothe myself. He protects me from all danger, preserves and guards me against all evil. I may therefore rest secure. I can with

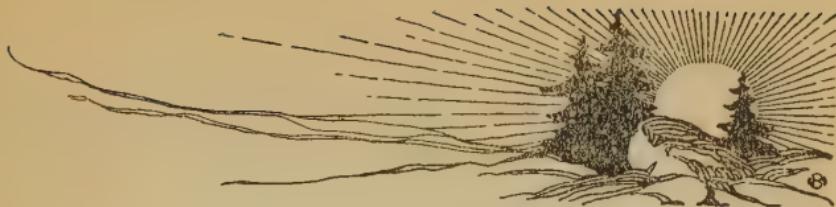
safety meet danger and difficulties, for it is my Father who leads and directs all.

But in order to possess this happy assurance, I must make proper use of his gifts, and serve him with all diligence, walking in his footsteps. If by the grace of God I am enabled to believe that he has created me and that he sustains me out of his "pure, paternal, and divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me", how can it be possible for me to feel "other than in duty bound to thank and praise, serve, and obey him"?

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John 3: 1).

Our God for all our need provides;
His sun alike o'er all doth shine;
From none His glorious beams He hides;
So rich, so free, His Love divine.

Arthur Tozer Russell.



5.

YOUR FATHER, WHICH SEETH IN SECRET.

Jesus said:

When thou prayest enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. Matth. 6: 6.

Your Father is hidden from you. You do not see him. You do not notice that he directs and penetrates into your life. This causes you sometimes to doubt. But he is there; he is in secret, says Jesus.

Your Father sees in secret. He looks to the heart, he knows your thoughts and intentions, he sees if you are insincere. Men you may deceive, but not your heavenly Father. You may hide yourself from the scrutiny of every human eye, but God still sees. His eye penetrates the heart and knows the inclinations, the fantasies and the

thoughts which you anxiously conceal and which you would be ashamed to reveal. Remember, wherever you are or whatever you undertake: "Thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly".

The one Jesus teaches us to call Father he also called "righteous Father" and "holy Father" (John 17: 11, 25). We cannot acknowledge him to be our God unless we fear him. The fear of God is true godliness.

Your Father sees in secret. He sees your difficulties, your cares, your temptations and your struggles. And he that sees all this is your Father. He sees not only that which fills your heart with anxiety, but he sees also you, his child, who need help and protection. What comfort and encouragement in this thought.

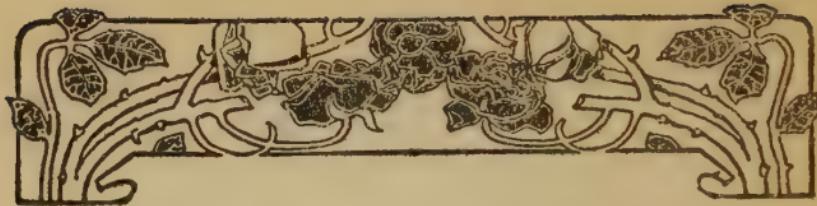
Your Father who is in secret sees in secret. He is not far away; he is so near that he hears your every sigh, be it ever so faint. Pray then to your Father. He hears prayer. You may not find suitable words and your prayer may be weak, but God hears the weakest and faintest prayer, for not only his eye, but his ear also, is inclined toward you, and above all, his heart is inclined toward you. If a child speak to his parents in a manner ever so weak and imperfect, yea, even though it speak not at all, the parents understand the searching look and the outstretched hand. They understand the child's language and thoughts, for it is the language of the heart, and they have hearts. So likewise

God hears the most inaudible prayer when it comes from the heart, for he sees in secret.

He hears prayer. If you would receive the divine blessing during the period of preparation for confirmation, make sure to enter often into your private chamber and seek your Father in prayer. He is there present in secret; there you will find him. You seek him and he seeks you. He seeks worshippers (John 4: 23). You seek each other and you shall surely meet.

Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer,
Thy wings shall my petitions bear
To Him whose truth and faithfulness
Engage the waiting soul to bless;
And since He bids me seek His face,
Believe his Word, and trust His grace,
I'll cast on Him my every care,
And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer.

Frances Jane Crosby.



6.

YOUR FATHER FORGIVES.

Jesus said:

“When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him”. Luke 15: 20.

 **T**he son was far off, for he had gone far away. His father mourned for him as dead and lost, but he was still his father. He still regarded him as his son and longed for him.

The father never ceased looking for the son in the direction in which he had left and therefore he saw him when still a great way off. When he sees him returning he cannot wait until he arrives, but hurries, yea, he runs to meet him and greets him as his son, the beloved, the longed for, while he embraces and kisses him.

All the sins of the prodigal, all the sorrows he occasioned, are forgotten by the father when the son returns. He forgives the son the moment he sees

him return. He forgives completely; there is no sin of the many committed by the son upon which the father reflects; there is no ill feeling or anger left — all is forgotten.

God is therefore a forgiving Father. As such Jesus represents him to us. Jesus has declared the Father to us (John 1: 18).

You feel lonely and forsaken; no one inquires for you. There is One who cares for you, who has a heart for you and longs for you. It is your Father.

You have wandered from him, you have neither sought him nor thought of him; often you have disobeyed him. Think of your evil companions, your defiant spirit, your disobedience to parents, the many sinful and impure thoughts of your heart. In a quiet moment when you are alone, maybe you, like the prodigal son, will stop to reflect. You feel oppressed, you are not happy, all is not as it should be. But now you wish to change, you wish to seek your Father, you wish to begin a new life. Listen then to these comforting words from Jesus: "When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him".

Do not fear the quiet moments, but seek God when you feel lonely. You are not created to be alone, you are created to be with God. Arise and go to your Father! But mark well, it was when the son returned that the father received him as

his son. Had he stayed away he would have remained the prodigal. Arise and go to your Father!

Lord, to Thee I make confession,
I have sinned and gone astray,
I have multiplied transgression,
Chosen for myself the way,
Let Thy Spirit leave me never,
Make me only Thine forever!

Johann Franck.
Catherine Winkworth.

THE WAY UNTO THE FATHER.

Jesus said:

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. John 14: 6.

He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. John 14: 9.

All things are delivered unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Matth. 11: 27-30.

Follow me. Matth. 9: 9. Mark 10: 21. Luke 9: 59. John 1: 44. John 21: 19.

 *You wish to come to the Father. You have been separated from him, and without him you cannot possibly find peace unto your soul.*

How shall I find him? Where is that friend whom I seek everywhere? How long shall my heart continue to sigh, seeking for peace and never finding it here in life? Come unto me, says Jesus, and ye shall find peace. I am the way, no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. Follow me!

You feel like the lost child that cannot find its way home. You feel like the child that has been disobedient and therefore does not dare to go home. Jesus says to you, come, take my hand, and you shall find the way. Come boldly, I will lead you to the Father, who forgives. Believe in me, trust in me, hold fast to me and you will find peace unto your soul. You need not fear that God will reject you. He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.

As Jesus was, so is the Father. The Pharisees and Scribes murmured against Jesus because he received publicans and sinners, and they called him "the friend of sinners". But he that hath seen Jesus hath seen the Father; therefore the Father also is the friend of sinners.

This thought could never have come to us, had not Jesus revealed God to us in the parable of the prodigal son, and Jesus knows the Father. Trusting in the words of Jesus we may dare go to the Father. Jesus is the way. If we follow him we will come to the Father.

"Follow me!" Jesus repeats this word very often. He wishes to say the same to you now. No doubt you have heard his call more than once. He

calls you to be his disciple. And whither does Jesus lead? "I go to the Father", is his answer (John 14: 12, 28; 16: 10, 28).

Thou art the Way: to Thee alone
From sin and death we flee:
And he who would the Father seek,
Must seek Him, Lord, by Thee.

Thou art the Way, the Truth, the Life:
Grant us that Way to know,
That Truth to keep, that Life to win,
Whose joys eternal flow.

George W. Doane.



8.

THE DRAWING POWER OF THE FATHER.

Jesus said:

*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me;
and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*

John 6: 37.

*No man can come to me, except the Father which
has sent me, draw him.* John 6: 44.

*No man can come unto me, except it were given
unto him of my Father.* John 6: 65.

We cannot come to the Father without Jesus. But in these words of the Lord we also learn that we cannot come to Jesus unless the Father draw us. What does this mean? The first disciples of Jesus give us the best example. Before they came to Jesus they had studied Moses and the prophets, and in them had sought for truth and wisdom, comfort and assurance. When

John appeared they hurried to him. What power was it that drew them? They sought for truth, peace and righteousness. They were seekers after God. This wonderful longing, this hunger and thirst of the soul which they experienced came through the drawing power of the Father. Therefore they came to Jesus.

A young man once came to Jesus. He was rich in worldly goods. He possessed even greater riches, for he had a clear conscience. He could testify before Christ that he had kept the commandments of the law. But he was not happy. There was something lacking, and for that reason he went to Jesus. He kneeled to Jesus and asked: "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" When he lingered and asked what it was that was still lacking, Jesus, beholding him, loved him (Mark 10: 17-22). He was one who felt the Father's drawing power. He was one that the Father had given the Son, therefore Jesus loved him.

There have been in your life moments of inner unrest and dissatisfaction, moments when you felt so weak, so impure, so far from happiness, when the world seemed so empty. You felt that nothing, nothing in the world could satisfy you, and you were possessed with a peculiar anxiety. You sighed, yea, you could have wished to shout from the depth of your heart, "What do I lack, O, what is lacking in me? What is truth, all seems dark; what shall I believe, what is certain?" If you wish to be candid, you must acknowledge, that

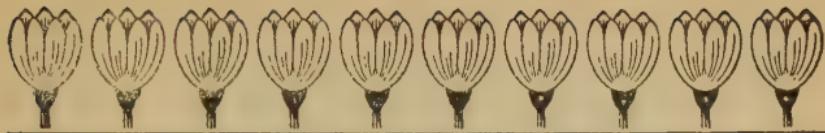
however painful those moments, they were your best moments. Never have you felt the yearning for all that is good, and righteous, and true, so strongly as then. It was something of God, of heaven, of eternity, that moved your heart. It was the Father's drawing power that you felt. You then became a seeker after God.

Jesus beholding you loved you and said: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me."

The Father calls; let every ear
 Attend the heavenly sound.
Ye doubting souls, dismiss your fear;
 Hope smiles reviving round.

Ye sinners, come, 'tis mercy's voice;
 The gracious call obey:
Mercy invites to heavenly joys,
 And can you yet delay?

Anne Steele.



JESUS!

Jesus said:

I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. John 6: 35.

If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink!

John 7: 37.

I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life. John 8: 12.

I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. I am the good shepherd and know my sheep and am known of mine. My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. John 10: 11, 14, 27, 28.

I am the way, the truth and the life. John 14: 6.

W

hen Jesus speaks these glorious words he would seem to ask: "Is there anyone here who is suffering from hunger or thirst,

who is groping in the darkness, whose soul is filled with trembling and anxiety?" In answer you would say: Yes, here is one. Then Jesus says: I am the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, the Good Shepherd. Do you think that he who speaks thus does not understand you, does not know what is transpiring in the depth of your soul? Do you think he would deceive you or ridicule that which you feel to be the best, the holiest within you?

Never to hunger or thirst, never to need to grope in darkness and uncertainty! To be safe as a lamb in the shepherd's arms! Are not these the blessings for which you sigh and long?

You cannot live without bread, without drink. Should the light of the sun die away, our earth would be enveloped in darkness and cold, all life would die. When Jesus says that he is the Bread of Life, the Fountain of Life, the Light of Life, he would say to you, you cannot live without me.

Without the shepherd the lamb would go astray and become the prey of wolves. You are beset by dangers on all sides. Many a young man and woman has gone astray in life, has yielded to temptations and become a slave to sin and the world. They have gone from God, lived without God and forgotten heaven. Then comes the day when they must die and leave this world. They have then no longer a foothold on earth, — and no place in heaven. When they reflect upon their past life they must feel that their life has indeed been wasted.

Without Jesus you are as the lamb without the

shepherd. But with Jesus you are secure, nothing can tear you from his side, not even death.

Saviour, like a shepherd lead us,
Much we need Thy tenderest care;
In Thy pleasant pastures feed us,
For our use thy fold prepare.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
Thou hast bought us, Thine we are.

Dorothy A. Thrupp.



THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD.

Jesus said:

Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?

Whom say ye that I am?

Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. Matth. 16: 13-17.

*W*e might say that these are Jesus' confirmation questions to the disciples. The first question is easily answered, for it is not difficult to quote the words of others. But the second question is personal, and the answer must be your own confession. Peter answers in the name of all the disciples: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus confirms this confession.

Jesus had never told his disciples who he was. How then did Peter know? The Father had revealed it to him, says Jesus. In what manner did this take place?

Peter was drawn by the Father and came to Je-

sus. You remember how Peter on the occasion of the great draught of fishes, described in Luke 5: 1-11, was overpowered on beholding this miracle of the Lord. He had never witnessed anything like it before. It must be that God himself had intervened. Peter suddenly felt that he was standing before — the living God. God beheld him through the eyes of Jesus. God spoke through the mouth of Jesus. Jesus and the living God belong together, they are one. It cannot but be that Jesus comes from the living God and is his Son. How great does not Jesus seem to him at this moment? How little, weak and sinful Peter feels himself to be. This he expresses when he cries out: "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." But Jesus would answer: Fear not, you are indeed a sinful man, but have no fear. It is the "Saviour" that speaks. Peter feels that Jesus loves him even though he is a sinner. In the same merciful and forgiving way that Jesus looks upon him does God also see him, and Peter begins to understand the meaning of the words of Jesus: "He that seeth me, seeth the Father."

Peter follows Jesus and discovers more and more that Jesus satisfies that longing, that hunger and thirst, which God has placed in his heart. He is the Bread of Life and the Fountain of Life. He is Light and Truth. Jesus satisfies the soul's longing for God. When he has Jesus he has God, God who forgives, God who loves as a father. In this

manner Peter comes to the great confession: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

This conviction came to Peter gradually. The Father that has drawn him leads him little by little to understand that Jesus possesses all that the soul requires, and he learns to know who Jesus is. The Father has revealed this to Peter.

Dear friend, it is easy to answer questions concerning Jesus in the words of others, but what have you yourself experienced through personal contact with him? What is he to you?

Son of God, to Thee I cry!
By the holy mystery
Of Thy dwelling here on earth,
By Thy pure and holy birth, —
Lord, Thy presence let me see,
Manifest Thyself to me!

Richard Mant.



II.

THE CROSS OF JESUS.

Jesus said:

Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again. Matth. 20: 18, 19.

I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. John 10: 11.

Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. Matth. 20: 28.

This is my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins. Matth. 26: 28.

Forgive them; for they know not what they do.
Luke 23: 34.

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. John 12: 32.


*W*hen the disciples had made the confession
“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,” Jesus began to tell them

about his journey to Jerusalem, his suffering and death.

Jesus must die, for he alone was righteous. Men are often so narrow that they do not enjoy seeing others more prosperous, happier or richer than themselves. They are ready to criticise very severely such as may be considered better and nobler than themselves. The people viewed the purity and holiness of Jesus as an accusation against their sins. Nor did Jesus hesitate to tell them of their sins. He must tell them this, for no one can be saved, unless he knows of his sins. For this reason they hated him and led him forth to the cross. God's chosen people and the Gentiles now agreed together, — Jesus must die.

Jesus must die, for he was obedient unto death. Not for a moment did he lose his faith in the Father. No words of complaint or unbelief passed his lips, nor did he utter a word of anger or bitterness to them that crucified and tortured him. Never did his purity, love and trust in God stand out so clearly as when he hung on the cross. During his entire life he was well pleasing unto God, but never could he rely more completely upon the good-will of the Father than when he hung on the cross. There has been at least one person on earth on whom God could look with perfect good-will. Jesus was obedient unto death.

Jesus must die, for he was the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd cannot stand idly by when the wolves come to destroy his sheep. He cannot for-

sake them to save himself. He must come between them and the wolves, even though it cost him his life. The wolf must first conquer him before he can reach the fold that belongs to him. The wolf was slain. It cost the Shepherd his life, but the sheep were saved. He gave his life and they were saved. Jesus must die.

The cross of Christ is planted in the world. It has three arms. Two of these are outstretched to embrace the whole world. He would draw all men to him. The love of Jesus, even unto death, draws hearts to him. How wonderful it is to dwell at the cross of Jesus. The third arm stretches upward into heaven, to the throne of mercy. It is well to stand at the cross when Jesus stretches out his arms in the prayer: "Father, forgive them. I give my life for them for the remission of their sins."

In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.

Sir John Bowring.



THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

Jesus said:

The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel. Mark 1: 15.

After this manner, pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Matth. 6: 9.

The kingdom of God is within you. Luke 17: 21.
My kingdom is not of this world. John 18: 36.

Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.
Matth. 25: 34.

 *The kingdom of heaven occupies a foremost place in the gospel of Jesus, which is also called the "gospel of the kingdom."* Always Jesus speaks of this in his parables, which usually begin with the words: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto . . ."

What, then, is the kingdom of God? God's kingdom is found wherever he dwells, and where

he rules as King. Jesus came from this kingdom. He promises that all that come to him and honor him as their King by obeying and trusting in him, seeking his help and showing heartfelt loyalty to him shall become members of this kingdom and share its glory. Even now, while we are yet in this world, we can belong to his kingdom and count on its protection and help, in the same way as a traveler counts on the protection of the home government, while sojourning in a foreign land.

The kingdom of heaven exerts a power in the world. Although unseen, Jesus is here; likewise his gifts, such as peace, righteousness, the forgiveness of sins, and the gift of the Spirit, together with their fruits: love, goodness, patience and hope. Such things are not of the world, but belong to the kingdom of God. Yet they are found here and exert great power.

The kingdom of God comes to us through the words of Jesus and the sacraments. Jesus sows his words and thoughts in the hearts of men. There they take root and grow, bringing forth fruit in the form of faith, righteousness and love. This brings to us a foretaste of heaven.

Jesus wishes that the kingdom might come to all. It belongs to the children. All nations are to be received into the kingdom. The purpose of the catechetical instruction which you have received, is to bring to your heart the blessings of the kingdom of God. The gospel of Jesus has not only been sown in individual hearts, but also in the world at

large, where it has brought rich blessings. Wherever it has taken root, wonderful changes have been seen; laws, customs and thought have been revolutionized. The kingdom of heaven has been the greatest civilizer in the world. Wonderful has been its growth and its influence. When the kingdom shall have been preached for a witness to all nations, then shall the end come. Then shall Christ come again and reveal the glories of the eternal kingdom.

Forever with the Lord!
Father, if 'tis Thy will,
The promise of that faithful word
E'en here to me fulfill.

Be Thou at my right hand,
Then can I never fail;
Uphold Thou me, and I shall stand,
Fight, and I must prevail.

James Montgomery.



13.

GO YE!

Jesus said:

When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven! Thy kingdom come. Luke 11: 2.

Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Luke 12: 32.

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.
Matth. 28: 18-20.

*J*esus wishes the earth to become God's kingdom. But in the world, heathenism, sin, want and death still exist. The earth must therefore be conquered by the Lord, and this is to be accomplished through his disciples. This shall also come to pass, for, says Jesus, "it has pleased your Father to give you the kingdom." It is there-

fore not a hopeless undertaking. "Go ye therefore." This is the Lord's command, which we cannot escape, if we wish to be disciples of Jesus. Therefore go ye!

There are still more than one billion heathen upon the earth. They live without God and without hope in the world, buried in sin and vice, slavery, degradation and death. But even they have human hearts, that with untold anguish sigh and long for peace and never find it in this world. Listen to the heartrending cries of these, and then know that it is God's command: Go ye!

In our day it is not far to the heathen countries; railroads and ocean liners have shortened the distance, which make them easy of access. The Lord has opened the way, and he says: Go ye!

It is now comparatively safe for a missionary to reside in a heathen land. The heathen nations are under the rule of Christian countries. The Lord has opened the door and he says: Go ye!

Each year many prodigal sons from Christian lands come to the heathen countries. They come with sin and vice, driven by lust for gold and pleasure. Should the heathen get their impressions of Christianity from such as these? The Lord says to his disciples: Go ye!

Something must be done. You pray each day: Thy kingdom come! Then you must not sit and wait for God to let it come. No, you must help. Jesus commands his disciples to join him. Go ye!

But I cannot go, you say. Do then the little

you can. Subscribe for a mission paper, so that you do not forget the Lord's admonition. Join a mission society. You can assist in the mission cause by your work — your mite — your prayer. Let not the mission workers be alone in their fields. Be with them in thought, interest and prayer. There are many ways of obeying the Lord's missionary command, Go ye !

From Greenland's icy mountains,
From India's coral strand:
Where Afric's sunny fountains
 Roll down their golden sand;
From many an ancient river,
 From many a palmy plain,
They call us to deliver
 Their land from error's chain.

Reginald Heber.



MY LORD AND MY GOD.

Jesus said:

Peace be unto you!

Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing. John 20: 26, 27.

 **T**hus speaks the risen Christ to his disciples and especially to Thomas. The disciples had forsaken everything and followed Jesus. He was to them the Bread of Life. He possessed the words of eternal life. To whom else could they go?

But when he was crucified, all their hopes were crushed. Their lives seemed to them failures, not worth living; but they could not help but love him and believe in him. They could not believe that he was a deceiver.

Anxiety of heart together with the thirsting and longing of the soul had at one time drawn them to Jesus. Then they did not know what they longed

for, but now — now they knew what was missing. All their sorrow and longing and prayer was connected with the one name, Jesus — God ! God had come to them through Jesus. He had spoken to them through the mouth of Jesus. They had seen God's glory in the miracles of Jesus. God, or rather the Father, had been near to them. But now — now Jesus was gone, and — the Father — gone.

When, however, Jesus, on the evening of the resurrection day is again amongst them, their hearts are filled with rejoicing; faith and hope are revived; care and anxiety have fled. Jesus is there, and — the Father. "Peace be unto you," says Jesus, and peace they receive.

One week later Jesus again came amongst them and greeted them with the words: "Peace be unto you," and speaks especially to Thomas, saying: "Behold my hands, thrust thy hand into my side!" Thomas sees Christ's hands and his side, but he also sees more. He sees Christ's heart, sees that it is unchanged, sees that Jesus, although unseen, had followed him, had a thought for him, had heard his doubting words and still did not turn him away. Thomas sinks upon his knees and cries: "My Lord and my God!"

There is no trick of language or studied thought with Thomas now. He cannot find any other word or name for what he sees but the name of God. Jesus accepts this adoration.

What Thomas here utters has become the confession of the Christian Church. The bond of union

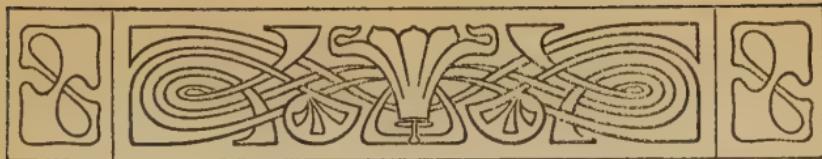
among the early Christians was found in the following expression: "All that call upon the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord." (1 Cor. 1: 2).

You have learned the confession of Thomas and the whole Church; may it also become the confession of your heart! He that has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, secured and delivered me from all sins, he is my Lord and my God.

All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all.

Hail Him, ye heirs of David's line
Whom David Lord did call;
The Lord incarnate, Man divine:
And crown Him Lord of all.

Edward Perronet.



THE HOLY GHOST.

Jesus said:

I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. John 14: 16, 17.

It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. John 16: 7.

Jesus speaks of another Comforter. Until now he himself has been the helper and comforter of the disciples. When therefore Jesus goes away they were not to grieve but rather rejoice, for rich blessings would come to them through his departure.

This other Comforter would not leave them, but would remain with them through all time.

In the same breath that Jesus promises his dis-

ciples another Comforter he also gives this promise: "I shall come again" (John 14: 3), "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you" (John 14: 18). Thus Jesus has given his promise that he shall come again. What is his meaning? He surely does not refer to the few appearances after his resurrection, when he came and disappeared, for then the disciples would again be fatherless. We must interpret the promises of Jesus in this way: Through his death he left his disciples, through his ascension he went to the Father, and on Pentecost he came again in the Holy Ghost. When the Spirit came upon the disciples they felt that Jesus was near them, even though they could not see him. The Spirit and Jesus are one.

This Spirit was, however, not unknown to the disciples. The miracles of Jesus, his preaching and personality had so moved them, that they forsook all and followed him. How did this come about? The disciples had seen and felt the Spirit which dwelt in Jesus and which they perceived in his words and deeds (John 6: 63. Matth. 12: 28). But the world did not recognize the Spirit in Jesus.

Whilst Jesus was amongst the disciples, the Spirit was with them, but after his departure the Spirit would dwell within them. Like Jesus, they were to become filled with the Spirit. Jesus would then dwell in their hearts (John 14: 20, 23).

Which is the greater — to follow Jesus, see his miracles, hear his words, associate with him, or to be filled with his Spirit? Jesus holds that the lat-

ter is the greater. What was it that took such a miraculous hold on the masses that listened to Peter on the day of Pentecost? Jesus had fulfilled his promise: "He shall be in you."

How was it that the cultured Greeks listened to Paul, the despised Jew, who came preaching the foolishness of the cross without great wisdom? Jesus fulfilled his promise: "He shall be in you."

What is the power that still takes hold of the people at the time of religious awakening? Jesus still fulfills his promise: "He shall be in you."

We cannot see Jesus now, but we may experience the workings of the Spirit in our hearts and then we know that Jesus lives and is near us.

Come, Holy Ghost, in love
Shed on us from above
Thine own bright ray!
Divinely good Thou art;
Thy sacred gifts impart
To gladden each sad heart:
O come to-day!

Ray Palmer.



THE HOLY GHOST AND THE CHURCH.

Jesus said:

I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Matth. 16: 18, 19.

When Jesus hears the confession of Peter: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," his heart is filled with a deep inner joy. He feels that he has not worked in vain. There is a something in the hearts of his disciples on which he can build. The disciples had experienced something which they could not deny. There is something within them so strong that no power on earth could rob them of it; this is what Jesus otherwise calls the drawing power of the Fa-

ther. Here Christ had found a rock on which to build his Church.

On Pentecost, when Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, preached to the people, his words reached this foundation in the hearts of his hearers. They that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2: 41, 42). Through Baptism the people were received into the Church. Afterwards they met to hear the teachings of the apostles and to partake of the Lord's Supper. Thus Jesus built his Church in the world. We would therefore say: The Church of Christ is the communion into which we are received through Baptism, and in which we gather about the Word and Table of the Lord. Baptism, the Word of God and the Lord's Supper are the means of grace always in use in the Church of Christ even unto the end of time. These means of grace are characteristic of the Church and the means by which the Holy Ghost works in the hearts of men.

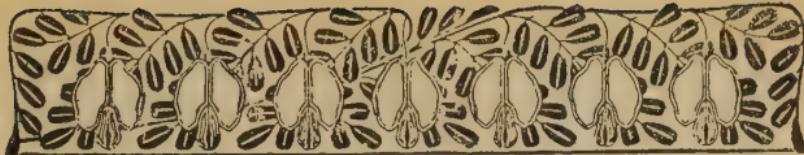
The Holy Ghost does not come to us in the same way that he came to the apostles. He descended upon them directly from heaven. To us the Holy Ghost comes through Baptism, the Word and Holy Communion, and these means are to be found in the Church. If the work of the Holy Ghost is to be effectual within us, we must belong to the Church

of Jesus. We must through Baptism be received into the Church, and together with others hear the word of God and partake of the Lord's Supper. If you neglect to use these means of grace, you remain out of the reach of the Holy Ghost, and he cannot then perform his work in your heart. Then another spirit, the spirit of the world, will obtain the ascendancy over you.

You have been received into the Church of Jesus. It is here that Jesus seeks through the Holy Ghost to influence you and meet your deepest needs. He would have you take your place in the Church and do your duty. This you will do when you faithfully use the means of grace and join in with the work of the congregation. The Church of Christ in this world is placed between the powers of darkness and the kingdom of heaven. Both are struggling for the mastery. But the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church. She is the Lord's possession and has the keys of the kingdom. It is blessed to belong to the Church of Jesus.

The Church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is His new creation
By water and the Word;
From Heaven He came and sought her
To be His holy bride,
With His own blood He bought her,
And for her life He died.

Samuel John Stone,



THE HOLY GHOST AND THE HEART.

Jesus said:

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. John 14: 26.

And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. John 16: 8.

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. John 16: 13.

You have been received into the Church of Jesus, and have come under the influence of the Holy Ghost. The Spirit will, according to the promise of Jesus, teach, reprove, lead and guide men in the truth. To know the truth is not the same as to live in accordance with it. To know what is evil is not the same as to avoid evil. There are people who have much knowledge and a good

understanding, who nevertheless live in sin and rush to destruction. But when God's Spirit is allowed to teach, reprove, lead and guide, then knowledge moves from the head to the heart, and out of the heart are the issues of life. As the heart is, so is the life. God's Spirit in the heart hallows the life. Perhaps there has been some word from the lips of Jesus with which you have been familiar, but which did not lay hold of your heart. Suddenly it became living, it came to mean something to you, it seized your heart, you could not let it be, you must pay heed to it. How did this happen? It was the Spirit, which brought this word to your remembrance and made it living within you.

Often you have heard the words of Jesus concerning sin, righteousness and judgment, but you have been indifferent. All at once such a word penetrates into your heart and you become terrified and begin to ask: "What shall I do to be saved?" What was this? It was the Spirit that spoke to you the truth concerning sin. How many times have you heard of the love of Jesus, but your heart has been cold? Then of a sudden the thought takes possession of you: "Jesus loves me." You are filled with joy, your heart becomes warm and you resolve to begin a new life. What has happened? The Spirit has opened your heart to the truth.

You have, to be sure, read the Word of God, but without any special interest. Then you came to feel the precious power of God's Word on your

heart and you longed to hear his Word and to read it. What was this? It was the calling of the Holy Ghost through the gospel.

Or perhaps for a long time you have been seeking for God and for peace, if haply you might find them. Then suddenly or perhaps gradually a new light dawned in your soul, and you received the blessed assurance that you had a Saviour and a gracious Father. What was this? It was the Holy Ghost that enlightened you and led you to the truth.

Come, holy Comforter,
Thy sacred witness bear
In this glad hour:
Thou who almighty art,
Now rule in every heart,
And ne'er from us depart,
Spirit of power!

Charles Wesley.



STONY GROUND.

Jesus said:

Some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth; but when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.
Mark 4: 5, 6.

These are they which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended. Mark 4: 16, 17.

***I**n order that the Holy Ghost may perform his work in the heart, it is necessary that the word spoken by the Spirit take root and grow.*

In the parable of the seed that fell on stony ground, Jesus describes the condition of many hearts. We know that often the Word is received

with joy. It is abundantly preached and gladly heard. It does not pass without leaving its impressions. God's Spirit is present and many are moved to repentance. Still there are comparatively few that become deeply consecrated in their Christian life. We do not often meet a thoroughly mature Christian. On the contrary, there is much languishing Christianity. In the beginning all seems promising, but the fruit for which we look is lacking. Why is this? This parable of Jesus gives the explanation.

When the seed is planted in the ground, it grows in two directions, upwards and downwards. The higher upward the plant rises, the deeper must the roots shoot down into the soil. As summer advances and the sun mounts higher in the heavens, the rays burn more intensely and the roots must penetrate still deeper to get food and moisture.

That part of the plant that grows upward we can see, but the part that grows downward is concealed. Jesus shows us in this parable a picture of the spiritual life. It begins as a seed, grows downward and upward, hidden and visible.

The outward expression of the spiritual life is seen in deeds, Christian deeds, deeds of love, and in a life of public worship. We see this exemplified today in the work of missions, of charitable institutions, together with that of the Christian ministry.

Christianity has also its hidden side, something that is concealed from the public gaze. The Chris-

tian life has its hidden root, "the life hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3: 3). The deep inner life and the close intimacy with God through his Word and prayer are the roots of the hidden life.

It is indeed blessed to gather together in our places of worship to hearken to the preaching of the word and to pray, but this cannot take the place of quiet meditation and prayer in our private chamber. Without this deep inner life, all our deeds, however beautiful and good they may appear, would become dead; they would be rootless plants that wither away. In order that the external life of the Christian may become a blessing and a power it must be sustained by the inner life of the Spirit.

The life brought forth by the Spirit often dies, simply because the hidden life with God is neglected. It is therefore of the greatest importance that the Spirit of God be allowed to lead you in a life of prayer, to an humble and obedient use of the Word of God, in order that, in communion with your God and Saviour, you may find food, strength and guidance for your life.

Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer,
 That calls me from a world of care,
 And bids me at my Father's throne
 Make all my wants and wishes known;
 In seasons of distress and grief,
 My soul has often found relief,
 And oft escaped the tempter's snare
 By thy return, sweet hour of prayer.

Frances Jane Crosby.



THORNS.

Jesus said:

Some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

These are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word and it becometh unfruitful.

Mark 4: 17, 18, 19.

 **T**he good seed is planted in you. It grows when you meditate upon God's Word, when you pray, when you partake of Holy Communion, when you grieve over the sins you have committed, when you forget yourself to serve others. Watch for the thorns! They lie buried deep in the heart. Perhaps you are not aware of their existence, but they are there. "The cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches," these thorns you

have not as yet felt. "The lusts of other things," what is meant by this? Jesus once said: "From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness (Mark 7: 21, 22). Often it is impossible to separate lust and thought. What Jesus here enumerates are the roots of thorns. They are found in the heart.

We may anxiously guard ourselves against sinful actions, but we are not so careful about our thoughts. They are given free sway in the heart. Watch the thorns! Be careful of your thoughts. Evil thoughts are thorns that grow and gain strength. They take possession of you, direct your tongue to speak the evil word, compel your hand to perform the evil act.

The garden that is not carefully kept will soon be overgrown with weeds. Let the evil thoughts and desires have full play and they choke the good seed.

You have sometime experienced a desire to possess this or that. This desire grew and finally gained control over you, you could not bear to see anyone else possess what you wished without a feeling of envy. You sought to acquire it by fair means or foul. The thorn had grown up and choked your sense of what was right. The desire for pleasure has often choked the sense of duty. The desire for comfort and ease has choked the sense of truth. There was once a good child with the most prom-

ising prospects. Now this child is a drunkard. The desire for sinful pleasure choked the good seed. Luxurious living and the lust of the flesh have exercised a terrible influence over men and strangled many a promising sprout sprung from the good seed.

Control your desires. They work against your soul. If they are not conquered they will take possession of your thoughts and senses until you are driven to the wrong deed.

Fill your soul with good thoughts! Give expression to them in word and deed. Pray that God may grant you strength to do this!

What strange perplexities arise,
What anxious fears and jealousies!
What crowds in doubtful light appear,
How few, also, approved and clear!

Searcher of hearts, O search me still;
The secrets of my soul reveal;
My fears remove; let me appear
To God and my own conscience clear!

Samuel Davies.



YOUR WORDS.

Jesus said:

Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil. But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. Matth. 12: 33-37.

The Lord considers our words of great importance. We must account for them all. God shall judge us not only by our deeds, but also by our words. Not only the best words which we have spoken nor only the worst, but every word shall be taken into consideration, even the

the frivolous words which are neither good nor yet absolutely bad.

Is it right that we should be judged by our words? We judge others according to their words. If a person speaks in a foolish fashion, you call him foolish, but he that speaks wisely, you call wise. If any one speaks in a friendly way, he is considered friendly. If any one speaks in angry tones, he is angry. Our words indicate what we are. Thus we judge and thus does God judge.

For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Your heart is a store-house. Each time you speak, you reveal something of what is within you and show your character. You are the tree and your words are the fruit which the tree bears. The fruit indicates the nature of the tree. Our words show what we are. So God judges. When he judges us as we are, he must be just.

But how is it possible to account for every word? I cannot even remember the words I have spoken to-day. It is not necessary for you to remember them. Each passing year adds a new ring to the trunk of the tree, and in this way the tree reveals its age. So it is with your words. Your thoughts, words and deeds leave their impressions and set their seal upon your character, according to whether they have been good or bad. When the day of reckoning comes, you will appear as a printed book, in which all your words are written. In this way you daily write the book that shall be set before God on the day of judgment.

What is to be written in your book? Just think, all your thoughts, all your words, all your deeds!

What am I to do? You may well ask that question. How can this handwriting be blotted out? I know of but one way. Of the holy ones before the Lamb of God it is written: "They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 7: 14). We must therefore seek forgiveness through the blood of Jesus.

Empty your heart of evil by confessing your sins. Watch the door of your heart, that no evil may enter. Fill it with the good treasure!

Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to thee;
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise;
Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages for Thee;
Take myself and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.

Frances R. Havergal.

DO YOU PRAY?

Jesus said:

Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves: for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him, and he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Luke 11: 5-9.

*H*ere three friends are mentioned. One, a traveler, comes to a poor friend who is so poor that he has nothing to spread before him. In his embarrassment the friend hurries to his

neighbor. This neighbor is a friend and rich enough to give aid.

In this parable Jesus wishes to encourage us to pray. If an unwilling friend can be persuaded when persistently importuned, how much more will not God hear our prayers!

God is the rich friend; he is rich, therefore he is able to help; he is your friend, therefore he is willing to help. Whenever you are in an embarrassing position go to him and knock at his door. But it all seems so dark to me, you say; in the night of doubt and unbelief you cannot find the door. "Seek," says Jesus, "and ye shall find." You pray, but it seems as if you stood before a closed door. Knock, says Jesus, your Father is really there, he is within. Continue to knock, and the door shall be opened.

Perhaps you are poor, you have nothing and cannot help yourself. Think carefully of what Jesus means when he says, "You are the poor friend." Whoever feels the need of prayer is God's friend.

The friend in his journey often comes to see us. We have many such friends. Every sorrow, every want, every care, every necessity that makes us feel that we cannot help ourselves, is such a friend. God would have us seek him; therefore he often sends us traveling friends, so that we may feel the necessity of this help and come to him. God provides us richly with subjects for prayer. These are also God's gifts. Should no such traveler come to you, perhaps you would forget your rich friend,

who is nevertheless your friend. The traveling friend enables you to find him.

It often appears as if your rich friend does not wish to be your friend; he does not answer your pleading, at least not immediately; he delays. God delays in answering prayer in order to make us pray more fervently. God loves our prayers; he would hear us pray. The oftener you pray, the oftener you come to God. The oftener you come, the nearer you come to God. The more you pray, the more precious becomes God's gift. The more you pray, the more humble and obedient you become.

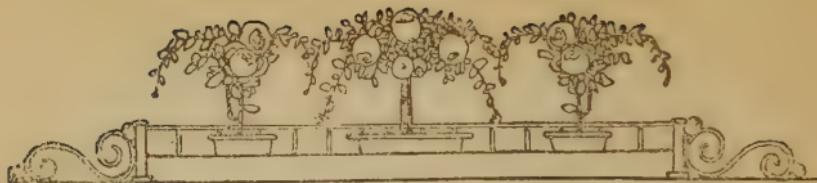
I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
from whence cometh my help.

My help cometh from the Lord,
which made heaven and earth.

Behold, he that keepeth Israel
shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord shall preserve thy going out
and thy coming in,
from this time forth,
and even for evermore.

Psalm 121.



DO YOU GIVE THANKS?

Jesus said:

Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. Luke 17: 17, 18.

Ten lepers had been cleansed and but one returned to give thanks. Jesus rejoiced over the one but asked with sorrow: "Where are the nine?" He would have been so pleased had they also returned. Jesus would have us give thanks.

We feel the same way. When we have been friendly, helpful, or given a gift, we feel hurt if we do not receive any thanks. But when anyone does thank, our hearts rejoice and we become attached to that person. So also God loves the person that is grateful.

Thanksgiving is the language of heaven. The holy angels and the redeemed praise God continual-

ly. They that thank are not far from the kingdom of God.

Ten were cleansed and but one returned to give thanks. This seems to be the general condition among men, and we are all inclined to follow this order. Nothing should, however, be more natural or easy than to thank; nevertheless it seems to be a difficult matter. Therefore God must teach us to give thanks.

One means which God uses to teach us to be thankful is want. When all goes well, we are apt to forget God; we are apt to think that we can get along without him. God heaps his blessings upon us every day. Morning, noon and night you sit before a well spread table. Each morning you arise in good health. You have your good home and a comfortable bed. You are surrounded by those you love. Thus your life is filled with many pleasures and comforts, if you would but see and appreciate them. We are so accustomed to receive God's gifts, that we do not notice them, and so forget to be thankful for them.

Still we are so dependent on these benefits that we could not do without them. For that reason God deprives us of one or another of his gifts. Then we begin to realize how precious and great they are. Then we begin to do as the lepers in need -- we cry out. When necessity presses upon you, your spirit becomes meek and yielding. How thankful you would be, if God only would help you! At such a time you know what it means to

be thankful. What wouldn't you do if God would but help you. You would abandon this or that sin or give up this or that habit. You would do so much good, if God would but help you. This shows a prayerful and thankful spirit. And so God has taught you through necessity to be thankful.

Want is a messenger from God, through whom he would say: "Do not forget me, do not forget my good deeds, do not forget to give thanks." But through this same messenger God would also say: "I have not forgotten you, I will help you."

God's readiness to help in time of need is also a means by which he teaches us to thank. He answers our cry and makes us thankful for his great benefits.

Now thank we all our God,
With heart and hands and voices.
Who wondrous things hath done,
In whom His earth rejoices;
Who from our mother's arms,
Hath blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love,
And still is ours to-day.

Martin Rinhart.
Catherine Winkworth.



THE LORD'S DAY.

Jesus said:

The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath.

Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath. Mark. 2: 27, 28.

Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days. Matth. 12: 12.

God made the Sabbath for man. The Sabbath is therefore a gift of God. Sabbath means rest. Only he that works needs rest. When God gave the Sabbath day he said: "Six days shalt thou labor!" This is one of God's commands. In order to have a day of rest I must first have worked. Then only can I enjoy rest; then only do I need rest; then only will I regard the day of rest as a precious gift that I received from God.

God commands us to work, but he is so merciful that he gives us a day of rest. This is to be a day of quickening and of joy. God never meant it to be a dreary and tiresome day. It was made

for man. The Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath. It is the Lord's day. This we must bear in mind. All days are indeed the Lord's days, but he lays special claim to the day of rest. However, on this day of rest we are so prone to forget God. Then we prefer to do as we please. Jesus would remind us that he is Lord also of the Sabbath. This same truth is impressed upon us in the third commandment: "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy." God would therefore say to us: you have received the day of rest as a divine gift, remember to keep it holy. In this way it becomes the Lord's day. How shall I keep the day holy? Scripture says: "Everything is sanctified by the word of God and prayer" (1 Tim. 4: 5). In this manner all days are to be kept holy, including the working days. No day is to pass without the Word of God and prayer! On the Sabbath day, however, we have more time for the reading of the Word and for prayer. Let us not neglect this, for in this way alone can we hallow the Lord's day.

We especially hallow the Lord's day when we gather in his holy courts, where he is to be found, in accordance with his assurance, "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them (Matth. 18: 20). Let therefore no Sunday pass without attendance upon church service.

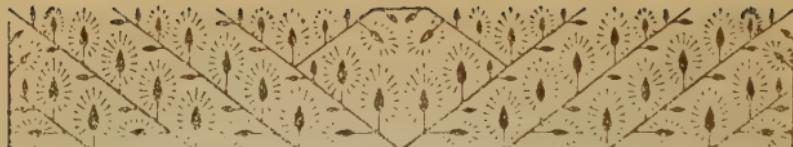
Jesus arose from the dead on a Sunday. When the disciples were gathered together on that day, he appeared in the midst of them. On the follow-

ing Sunday, as they were also gathered together, he appeared unto them. On the seventh Sunday thereafter he came to them in the Holy Ghost. Sunday, therefore, became the Lord's day for the disciples and the early Christians.

It was the rule of Jesus "to do well on the sabbath day." He would also richly bless us on that day. God has blessed the Sabbath day. If we neglect to celebrate the Lord's day, we deprive ourselves of God's blessing. A life without Sunday and without divine service is a life without God. It is a life lived in bondage under the yoke of the world, with its manifold cares. We also are "to do well on the sabbath day." Then we may also finally hope to enter into the Sabbath rest of the people of God (Hebr. 4: 9).

Safely through another week,
God has brought us on our way:
Let us now a blessing seek,
Waiting in his courts to-day;
Day of all the week the best,
Emblem of eternal rest.

John Newton.



YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER.

Jesus said:

“Honor thy father and thy mother.” This is God’s commandment. Mark 7: 10, 13.

Behold thy mother! John 19: 27.

*I*n the only story we have of the childhood and youth of Jesus, we are told that he was subject to his parents (Luke 2: 51).

This is the best and most beautiful thing that can be said of a child. Jesus was an obedient child. Afterwards, in his public ministry, he laid special emphasis on the commandment, “Honor thy father and thy mother.”

The manner in which Jesus speaks of God as his Father, who is a loving, kind and forgiving Father, upon whom we may implicitly rely and whom we must obey, leads us to understand that the relation between Jesus and his foster-father must have been of the tenderest kind. Jesus was a good son.

When Jesus was lifted up on the cross his last

concern was for his mother. Jesus was a tender-hearted son. A Christian is also a good son, a good daughter. Nothing more beautiful can be said of a person.

Why should I honor my father and mother?

In the first place because they were given to you by God. The authority they have over you they have received from God. You are never released from that authority.

He that honors father and mother, honors God. Furthermore you are to honor father and mother, because no one loves you as they do. They were your first friends. They loved you before you understood their love. They loved you before you were able to love them in return. Their friendship endures. Other friends may love you for a time. But you may be separated and then friendship ceases, but father and mother never cease to be your friends. When others no longer think well of you, your father and mother still cling to you and hope for the best, for "charity believeth all things, hopeth all things." Other friends may fail and forsake you, but father and mother never.

How much love have they not shown you! Behold your mother! Has she not carried you in her arms! Has she not tenderly cared for and nurtured you! How many weary steps has she not taken for your sake! When you were depressed, no one could comfort you as she could. When others tired of you and spurned you she listened eagerly to your complaint. She did not smile at your little cares,

and you saw no mark of despair in her face when you told of larger difficulties.

Behold your father! How has he not striven and labored to procure for you food and clothing and other things that you have needed! How has he not exerted himself to the utmost for your sake! What anxiety has he not borne that you might become a good and noble man!

What better friends have you than your father and mother? Should you not be willing, therefore, gladly and instantly, to obey and serve them! Would you want to grieve them through disobedience and harshness?

And when they become old, do not forget to care for them and love them: you can never repay their love.

Father, guide our steps aright
In the way that Jesus trod;
May it be our great delight
To obey thy will, O God!
Then to us shall soon be given
Endless bliss with Christ in heaven.



YOUR PEOPLE, YOUR COUNTRY,
YOUR HOME.

Jesus said:

A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then he said unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone, this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it; and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down. Luke 13: 6-9.



This parable illustrates Jesus' great love for his people. The fig tree is a symbol of Israel, and Israel was the chosen people of God. Jesus himself is the vine-dresser. He loves the vine, although it does not bear fruit. He intercedes for it, he desires to do everything for it that it may remain standing.

God, who has made the natural boundaries within which nations should dwell, has planted us as a nation in a most fertile and glorious country, which can be described as was once the land of Israel. Read Deut. 8: 8-11.

In this beautiful and rich country our people have dwelt generation after generation. Here our fathers have helped to settle the country and we have come into a blessed heritage with tilled fields and with hundreds of thousands of homes, which past and present generations have erected with their labor.

A mighty people has here with hardships and privations fought the struggle for existence, made laws, worshipped their God and trained their children to obey the laws of God and man. Now to this nation we belong. Even as our Master, we must love our land and nation, pray for it and do all in our power to make our people a God-fearing people, ready to serve him in his kingdom and anxious to promote righteousness and purity in the nation.

The tree which bears no fruit will be cut down. A nation which brings forth no fruit and which produces nothing of value, has no right to existence. There are nations which have succumbed, and which have been driven from their country.

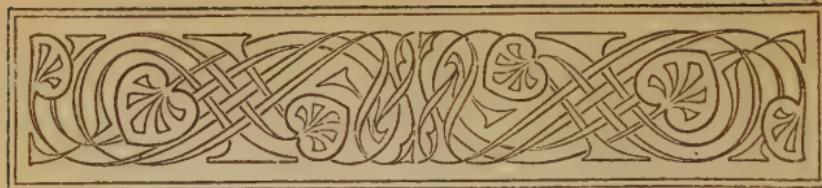
The vine-dresser desires to help by digging and fertilizing, i. e., by caring for the roots. Where are the roots of our people to be found? In the hundreds of thousands of homes spread over the

length and the breadth of our great country. It is therefore necessary to have good homes. From a good home there issues a wealth of happiness, a sweet incense and blessing over our country and people. It is from the good home that the civic virtues come, diligence and industry in one's calling, fidelity to one's country and readiness to sacrifice for its welfare and honor. The supporting power of these virtues is true Christian piety. But from the evil home, where strife and hatred are fostered, where drunkenness, untruth and vice prevail, from which every ray of sunshine has been banished, an unhappy generation must come forth, which will spread hatred, discontent, levity and damnation over the land.

Let us labor for the best welfare of our land, our homes, and of our church! Let us not forget that the Lord labors with us and crowns the work of our hands with his richest blessing!

God bless our native land,
Firm may she ever stand,
 Through storm and night.
When the wild tempests rave,
Ruler of wind and wave,
Do Thou our country save
 By Thy great might.

John Sullivan Dwight.



PURITY.

Jesus said:

Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Matth. 6: 25.

From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these things come from within, and defile the man. Mark. 7: 21-23.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Matth. 5: 8.

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.
Matth. 26: 41.


Your body is a precious gift of God. All the members of the body, great and small, are wonderful gifts of God. All are good, none is bad, and each serves its purpose. We may use them, but we are responsible for the manner in which we use them. All our work, all that we

do in thought, word and deed, is done by the wonderful powers of the body.

Precious as is the body, it should not become your master. It is to be your servant. To be efficient the body must be cared for and supplied with food and drink and rest. The gratification of the natural desires of the body afford pleasure, which in itself is a gift of God. For instance, you have a feeling of hunger and you need to eat. You need food to become strong, capable and ready to serve God in your work. The pleasure you experience, however, becomes a temptation to excess. Then the body becomes your master, though you ought to rule over the body.

What is then to be said of those other mysterious desires that are strong in early youth, as great changes are wrought in the body. These desires become a great temptation to sin against the body, which is meant to be the temple of the Holy Ghost. This sin has been called the sin of youth and is the most dangerous enemy of youth. Watch and pray!

Be the master of your body with its desires and passions, or the body will become your master, and you will become the slave of the sinful lusts of the flesh. The gratification of the sinful desires of the body leads to bondage under the yoke of sin and to moral degradation. Where the desires are given free sway they lead to lust, gluttony, drunkenness and unchastity. You writhe beneath their tyranny, but they control you and render impure your thoughts, your imagination, and your life,

and you struggle in vain to be free. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." This is the Lord's admonition. Flee from everything that may give rise to temptation. Respect yourself. Let no one with insinuating words fill your heart with evil and unclean thoughts!

However, when you are tempted, know that the temptation itself is not sin. In the yielding to temptation lies the sin. Your struggle is carried on in secret, but know that God's eye sees you, and his grace richly abounds toward you. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Yield not to temptation,
For yielding is sin,
Each vict'ry will help you
Some other to win;
Fight manfully onward,
Dark passions subdue,
Look ever to Jesus,
He'll carry you through.

H. R. Palmer.

YOUR TREASURE.

Jesus said:

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Matth. 6: 19-21.

Jesus speaks often of earthly treasures. They occupy a large place in the lives of men.

We need earthly possessions in order to live and work. They are good gifts of God.

Most frequently, however, Jesus sets forth the danger to which earthly possessions expose us. He speaks of the "deceitfulness of riches." "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he posseseth." Such is the Lord's warning, and how necessary it is for us in our day. Everywhere

in the world we see the power that money exercises. Jesus speaks of this world's goods as a mighty god that rules and tyrannizes over his servants. It is impossible at the same time to serve God and mammon.

To lay up treasures upon earth is to serve mammon. Wherein lies the danger of this?

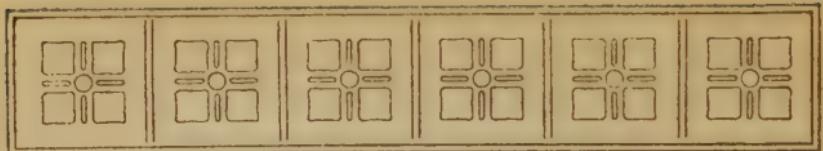
These treasures are not lasting, moth and rust corrupt them; they are not certain, thieves break through and steal them from us. They are the cause of manifold cares. Instead of guaranteeing to their possessor the feeling of security in the face of want, they give rise to untold anxiety. It is often true that the fear of poverty grows with the amassing of earthly possessions. Herein lies the danger. The earthly riches take possession of the heart. But the heart is created for eternity, and its hunger cannot be satisfied with the treasures of earth. Neither is it possible to satisfy the lust for earthly riches, and I become a most unhappy creature. And when finally God shall require my soul of me, how shall I not stand in the face of eternity infinitely poor and wretched!

Lay up for yourself, therefore, treasures in heaven, treasures that you may keep when the earth is taken from you! What sort of treasures can these be? We may think of the gifts of the Spirit, such as love, peace, joy, kindness, goodness, the grace and mercy of God, and above all, God himself and our Saviour. These treasures cannot be destroyed and no man can take them from us.

Your heart needs a treasure. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." You understand where your treasure is when you realize the trend of your thoughts. They tend in the direction of your treasure. Do your thoughts tend toward the earth or toward heaven?

Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow Thee;
Destitute, despised, forsaken,
Thou, from hence, my All shalt be.
Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought, or hoped, or known;
Yet how rich is my condition!
God and heaven are still my own.

Henry Francis Lyte.



TRUTH.

Jesus said:

I am the truth. John 14: 6.

Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

John 18: 37.

If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. John 8: 31, 32.

 *T*here is hardly anything that stirs you more deeply than to find a person untruthful. Nor is this strange, for all untruth comes from the father of lies. You cannot bear untruth in others; are you just as strict with regard to yourself? Have you not at some time been guilty of telling an untruth or making use of the white lie? Have you not at times exaggerated and at others told only half the truth? Have you in your daily walk and conversation shown yourself as you really are, or have you endeavored to conceal something and appear better than you are?

A person who is untruthful stands related to the

evil one as the father of lies, and gradually becomes indifferent to the spirit of truth. On the other hand, he that is of the truth is related to him who called himself the Truth.

What does it mean to be of the truth? It means to be true, to love the truth and to seek the truth. He that is of the truth has not destroyed that inner mysterious longing and thirst after God which God himself has implanted in every human heart. He feels the drawing power of the Father. Such an one understands the words of Jesus, for there is something in those words, something in the voice of Jesus that attracts him irresistibly and finds a response in his heart.

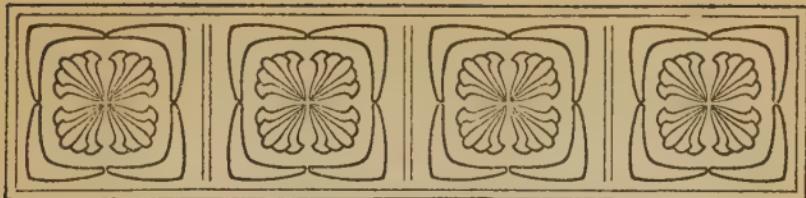
Falsehood has a wonderfully ensnaring power. One lie necessarily gives rise to another. One lie is meant to conceal another. Gradually a whole net of lies is woven, out of which it is impossible to disentangle ones self. The truth makes us free. If I endeavor to conceal a lie or a sin, I am in continual fear, lest it shall be revealed. I dare not be myself, dare not say what I know to be true. When the truth must be hidden in this fashion, then I am enslaved. The first condition of true liberty is to let the truth be revealed so that I can appear as I am. It is therefore of the utmost importance for the sinner who would be saved to acknowledge and confess his sins, so that he no longer need try to conceal them. After the confession of sin a new life is begun. The truth makes us free.

In this world of untruth, where men deceive and

are deceived, you often feel unhappy. You grope about in the darkness and ask: What is truth? What power shall tear asunder this network of lies? What power shall scatter the darkness, that I might see? Hear the answer of Jesus: "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. The truth shall make you free."

Jesus, when a little Child,
Taught us what we ought to be;
Holy, harmless, undefiled,
Was the Saviour's infancy;
All the Father's glory shone
In the person of his Son.

As in age and strength He grew,
Heavenly wisdom filled His breast;
Crowds attentive round Him drew,
Wondering at their infant Guest;
Gazed upon His lovely face,
Saw Him full of truth and grace.



29.

JOY.

Jesus said:

These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.
John 15: 11.

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. John 16: 24.

*J*esus would have his disciples joyful. The apostles rejoiced in their labors, sang songs of praise in prisons and glorified God in persecutions. Paul admonishes Christians to "Rejoice in the Lord alway!" Peter writes of a "joy unspeakable and full of glory." John in his first epistle says he writes "that your joy may be full." James encourages his brethren to "count it all joy when ye fall into diverse temptations." A Christian is therefore to be joyful.

However, it does not always seem that Christians

are so. Often you have met Christians who have been heavy-hearted, gloomy and sad. Such persons have not as yet come to understand the real meaning of Christianity. The gospel of Jesus would make us joyful, and if this has not been accomplished, then we have not become as God would have us. A Christian is to rejoice. Why is this of such importance? Because a joyful and happy condition of mind renders us more capable of accomplishing what we set out to do; it makes work a pleasure and gives us courage to meet and overcome difficulties. We are in this world to do something; we have a God-given duty to perform. If we enter upon our work dejected and discouraged, surely there will be little pleasure in it, and besides, it will be poorly done. God would have us joyful.

If you are dejected, this will have its influence on others. If you go about with sullen and gloomy countenance you may expect your entire environment to become depressed. But what right have you to rob those that are near and dear to you of all pleasure in life? A Christian must be joyful.

On the other hand, a beaming countenance also has its blessed influence on those with whom we come in contact. We pray: "Lord, make thy face to shine upon us!" Our faces should also beam with Christian joy. Rejoice, therefore, and make others glad!

Jesus would have us joyful. He does not condemn the play of the young, nor their sports, nor their association with friends. We need recreation.

We must not forget, however, that there are pleasures that are sinful. What pleasures are then permissible? Such as are countenanced by the Christian conscience. Do nothing against your conscience.

I take for granted that you pray. If, after having returned from some place or social gathering, you are not able in private to pray that God might bless what had been done at such a place or gathering, then there is danger that something was wrong. Such joys are permissible upon which we may ask God's blessing with a good conscience.

Jesus loves true joy, and on the great day he shall say to the faithful servant: "Enter into the joy of thy Lord!"

Children of the heavenly King,
As ye journey, sweetly sing;
Sing your Saviour's worthy praise,
Glorious in His works and ways.

John Cennick.



30.

LOVE.

Jesus said:

A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. John 13: 34, 35.

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good unto them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Matth. 5: 44, 45.

*A*bove all else Jesus teaches us that God is our Father, God is love. Above all else, what Jesus requires of us is that we should love. This is the new commandment of the Lord. This commandment was found before, to be sure, but no one had before laid the stress and emphasis upon it

that Jesus did. The chief mark of the disciples of Jesus is that they love one another, yea, to be the children of their Father in heaven, they are also to love their enemies. And yet, who can fulfill such a commandment?

Does this not require greater power and strength than we possess, especially to love our enemies? We are humiliated before this commandment. And yet Jesus would not impose upon us a burden heavier than we can bear. Rather the contrary.

What burden can be heavier than to have enemies and to bear malice and fierce hatred in our hearts toward them! The angry man does not look happy and is not happy. Hatred makes men unhappy. With hatred in our hearts we cannot boldly and cheerfully come to the throne of God. Jesus would deliver us from this sin.

On the other hand there is no greater nor deeper joy than to love and be loved. A friendly countenance beams with joy. We pray: "Lord, make thy face to shine upon us!" Let your countenance also shine with joy and love. God maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good! Let your sun, the light of your countenance, also shine on friends and enemies alike! Spread sunshine around you! Rejoice and make glad! — Love!

But how can you do this? Let the sun of God's love warm you! Let the dew of his grace fall upon your soul! "I have loved you," says Jesus. Know the love of Jesus! Do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, pray for them

that injure or offend you! Conquer yourself. Don't think of yourself. But, you object, I am not the master of my own heart. But the Holy Ghost can renew the heart, and the chief fruit of the Spirit is love (Gal. 5: 22). "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. 51: 10).

Love divine, all love excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down!
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,
All Thy faithful mercies crown,
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
Pure, unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation,
Enter every trembling heart!

Charles Wesley.



PEACE.

Jesus said:

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. John 14: 27.

The Oriental's greeting in meeting or leaving a friend was expressed in the words: "Peace be unto you!" In this greeting he "gave his peace." It was a wish he expressed, but how powerless are our wishes, if ever so heartfelt.

When Jesus was separated from his disciples he did not merely give expression to a passing wish, but actually gave his peace unto them. When he had departed, they received his Spirit, who took up his abode in their hearts. They could feel just as secure and certain as if Jesus still were with them. In this manner they possessed the peace of Jesus.

You long for peace. How can you find rest unto

your soul? You answer, if only I could be certain that I had a God that cared for me and loved me and guided me in the devious ways of life, if I could but come to him as to a father and cast all my cares at his feet, if I could be certain that he heard my prayers, then my heart would find peace.

All that Jesus has spoken concerning the Father is indeed precious and answers to my every need. But how shall I receive in my heart the blessed assurance of its truth? I have heard so much of the love of Jesus, who was faithful unto death, I have heard the truth proclaimed in his preaching and witnessed the purity of his life, but how can I be assured that he still lives, that he is my Saviour, and that I am saved?

Only the Holy Spirit can give you this assurance. The deepest ground for your unrest and anxiety is to be found in the fact that you are not as you ought to be, that something has come between you and your Father. It is your sin. When the Holy Spirit is permitted to reveal to you the depth of your sinfulness, so that in true penitence you seek the forgiveness of your sins, then you receive in your heart the blessed assurance: "God has for Jesus' sake forgiven my sins; I am his child."

This assurance comes through the means of grace. The Word of God declares to us that "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1: 9). In the Lord's Supper we receive the same assurance that the body of Jesus

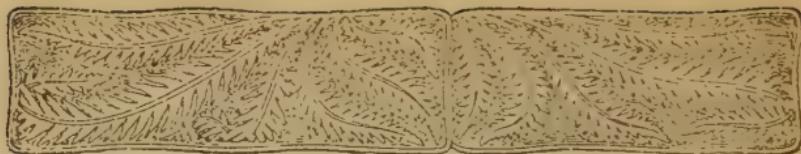
was given, and the blood of Jesus shed, for the remission of our sins. When we repent of our sins and ask for forgiveness, we receive the assurance that God is merciful and gracious to us, just as a father pitieh his child which has felt thoroughly unhappy and ill at ease because of its disobedience.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," says Paul (Rom. 5: 1).

It is when you can confess the words "I believe in the forgiveness of sins," that Jesus through his Spirit gives you peace.

Ah, yield Him all: in Him confide:
Where but with Him doth peace abide?
God calling yet! — I cannot stay;
My heart I yield without delay:
Vain world, farewell! from thee I part;
The voice of God has reached my heart!

Gerhard Terstegen.
Jane Borthwick.



YOUR SOUL.

Jesus said:

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Matt. 16: 26.

Your soul and the whole world — Jesus weighs them in the balance. Which is the more valuable, your little, apparently insignificant soul, or the great wide world with all its glory? Jesus does not hesitate in answering. Your soul is of priceless worth to yourself and — to Jesus. Do not throw away your soul!

The Lord Jesus was once taken to a high mountain where he could view all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. He was given the opportunity of ruling over these kingdoms. He could have come into instant possession of them by simply bending the knee. You have also been taken up on a high eminence. What young person has not What are the bewitching dreams of youth concern-

ing the future with its fortunes and deeds of greatness, other than a view of the world from such a mountain!

You are called to conquer the world, not all, but a part of it. You would be something, do something. What will you not accomplish when your hour is come! There are times when you plan great things, when the scope of your vision is wide; you are standing on the mountain. Thank God for the wide outlook; without it you will accomplish little! In order to succeed, however, you must prepare to labor and sacrifice.

You would win the world with its wealth, at least a part. You would be great, reach places of honor and power, live a life of pleasure and enjoyment. To reach the goal you often take short-cuts, you are not true to yourself, you are satisfied with appearances. What is this other than the yielding to the temptations of the tempter, and in yielding you lose your own soul. You might indeed gain the whole world, but you lose your own soul.

God would possess your soul. You may practice religion, you may do many good deeds, but perhaps there is one thing lacking, the warm breathing life of the Spirit! You pray, you take part in the church service, but God does not look to the bended knees, nor yet to the folded hands, but to your soul. You can give him nothing that can take its place.

In all your relations with your fellow men it is also true that you must deal whole-heartedly and

conscientiously, otherwise your actions will result merely in external politeness and hypocrisy.

What will be the condition of your soul when God comes to require it of you? It will be what it has become through all you have thought and said and done throughout your whole life. No thought or word or deed is insignificant or passes unheeded by, — each leaves its indelible impression on the soul. When God comes to require your soul, you cannot give him anything in the place of it, even if you shall have gained the whole world.

My God! permit me not to be
A stranger to myself and Thee:
Amidst a thousand thoughts I rove,
Forgetful of my highest love.

Why should my passions mix with earth,
And thus debase my heavenly birth?
Why should I cleave to things below,
And let my God, my Saviour, go.

Isaac Watts.



SECURE IN DEATH.

Jesus said:

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.
John 6: 37-40.

 *There is nothing of which men stand so greatly in fear as death. But Jesus says that he that cometh unto him need have no fear of death. Everything is dependent upon the will of the Father. "Not a sparrow shall fall to the ground without your Father," says Jesus (Matth. 10: 29).*

In my death God cannot will to do me any harm, and therefore I do not need to fear death.

Jesus says it is the will of his Father that the Lord Jesus shall not cast out anyone that cometh unto him, but rather that he shall care for all such most faithfully and tenderly, that none shall be lost, but shall be raised up on the last day and shall be granted everlasting life.

“Hark! hark, my soul! Angelic songs are swelling
O'er earth's green fields and ocean's wave-bent shore;
How sweet the truth those blessed strains are telling
Of that new life when sin shall be no more!

Angels of Jesus,
Angels of Light
Singing to welcome
The pilgrims of the night.”

It is the will of my heavenly Father that I shall have everlasting life. But in order to receive this precious gift I must pass through death and be raised up again. Inasmuch as death leads to such a glorious end, I need have no fear of death. Jesus does not forsake me, but shall lead me through the portals of death. “They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand” (John 10: 28). I am secure in his embrace, even until the last day. Then he shall raise me up unto life everlasting, unto the “inexpressible peace, joy and glory of the children of God in heaven.”

When the hour of death shall arrive, therefore, I need not be afraid; Jesus shall raise me up. Where

shall I receive such comforting assurance and help? He that is in danger of death cries for help, even though no man be near to render assistance. But when we pray unto Jesus in the hour of our need, in the hour of death, he hearkens unto our cry, and as we approach the border of death he assures us that "Him that cometh unto me shall I in no wise cast out." He receives me so that I can feel secure in the hour of death.

When my last hour is close at hand,
My last sad journey taken,
Do Thou, Lord Jesus, by me stand,
Let me not be forsaken,
O Lord, my spirit I resign
Into Thy loving hands divine;
'Tis safe within Thy keeping.

Nicholas Hermann.
Edgar Alfred Bowring.



HEAVEN.

Jesus said:

In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14: 2, 3.

Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. John 17: 24.

*J*esus does not only speak about the kingdom of heaven, but also of heaven. The kingdom of heaven is the new kingdom which he came to establish. Heaven is the world of glory. Jesus came from this world. He also returned to this world. From this world he will also return to this earth in his second advent. In the human heart is found an infinite longing for heaven.

We have heard how Jesus meets our deepest needs, how he satisfies the hunger and thirst of the soul. Jesus also meets our longing for salvation, our longing for heaven. He admonishes us to strive to reach heaven.

"Jesus, still lead on,
Till our rest be won;
And although the way be cheerless,
We will follow, calm and fearless,
Guide us by Thy hand
To our Fatherland!"

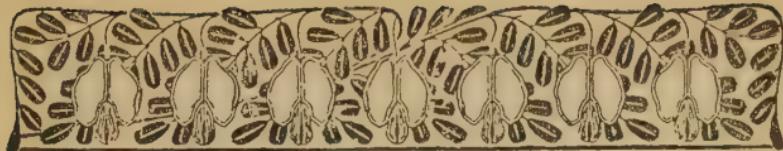
Jesus can speak of heaven as no other, because he came down from heaven (John 3: 13). For this reason he is also enabled to say: "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen" (John 3: 11). He is certain of what he says.

What can we learn about heaven? God dwells there. Jesus teaches us to pray "Our Father, which art in heaven." If God is our Father, then heaven is our home, there is our Father's house. There are many mansions, and Jesus has prepared them for us. You, too, have a mansion prepared for you there. There is a countless host of angels in heaven that rejoice over every sinner that repenteth and who is made ready to enter into glory. The angels are ready and willing to welcome us. There is glory. Jesus desires to have us not only only see this glory, but also to share it. "The righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." If I but walk faithfully in

the footsteps of the Saviour, I may be assured that I shall reach the kingdom of glory. And while I yet sojourn here below, I may gather treasures in heaven.

Unnumbered choirs before the shining throne
Their joyful anthems raise,
Till heaven's glad halls re-echo with the tone
Of that great hymn of praise,
 And all its host rejoices,
And all its blessed throng
 Unite their myriad voices
In one eternal song.

John Matthew Meyfart.
Catherine Winkworth.



YOUR CHOICE.

Jesus said:

Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat, because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Matth. 7: 13, 14.

You have received your instruction for confirmation. You have learnt what Jesus taught and what he has commanded. What fruit will this instruction bear, and what is to become of you? You stand at the parting of the ways. You can choose the broad or the narrow way. Which shall it be?

To keep the words of Jesus and live in accordance with them, is to walk in the narrow way; to reject his words and be indifferent to his commandments, is to walk on the broad way. Only one way leads unto life. It is the way Jesus has taught and upon which he himself has walked. All other

roads lead but to destruction. There are only two roads. Which do you choose? You enter upon the broad way through a wide gate. Entrance is so easily effected, that you perhaps hardly know when it occurred. This gate is found everywhere. You entered through this gate when you yielded to the tempter and followed him.

Once through the wide gate, you find the broad way before you. It is easy to travel, tending ever downward. All that is necessary is to gratify your every desire without resistance, and flee from every trial and difficulty.

For this reason there are many who travel on this road; they need only follow the current.

But this broad way leads to destruction, and Jesus loves you too dearly to permit you to travel on this road without warning. There is an abyss that lies straight ahead.

You enter upon the narrow way through the strait gate. To enter, it is necessary to abandon selfish desires and purposes. Read Matth. 5: 3-12, and earn what God requires for entrance through this gate.

Through this strait gate you enter upon the narrow way. It is easy to take a misstep. A move in the wrong direction will bring you on to the broad road, which runs on both sides of the narrow way. Abide firmly by God's Word and keep near to Jesus.

Because of the difficulties of entrance and of travel in the narrow way, there are but few who choose that road. However, be not afraid to be found

among the few. This way leads to life, the true Christian life, as it is embodied in Matth. 5: 3-12.

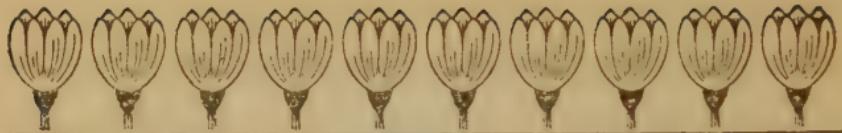
Your confirmation would help you to make your choice. You have reached the age when you should decide for yourself. The years of youth, say between fifteen and twenty, are the years of decision. You know what is right and wrong. Your choice may be decisive for your whole life. You stand at the parting of the ways. Make your choice!

"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Ps. 139: 24).

O that the Lord would guide my ways,
To keep His statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will!

To make me walk in His commands;
'Tis a delightful road:
Nor let my head, or heart, or hands.
Offend against my God.

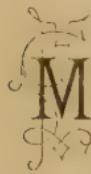
Isaac Watts.



YOUR CONFIRMATION.

Jesus said:

Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. John 12: 35, 36.



May I be confirmed? Dare I take this step? Such questions arise often during these days of your preparation for confirmation.

You have been baptized and received into the church of Christ. In confirmation you take upon yourself the vows made for you in your Baptism. You declare publicly that you would be a Christian. You would not be a heathen and live without God in the world. In Baptism you were made a child of God. You were received into the covenant of God. Your confirmation confirms this covenant of Baptism.

In your home, in Sunday-school, and now also in the catechetical class, you have been instructed in

all that Jesus commanded. You have learned that God is your Father, that Jesus is your Saviour, and that the Holy Spirit leads and guides you in the truth and makes you a child of God. This truth gives you joy and comfort and a feeling of security. Thus faith arises. During the period of your catechetical instruction the love of God and your Saviour has oftentimes warmed your heart, and you have determined that you would belong to the Lord. This is the faith into which you were baptized and to which you give expression in confirmation.

"While ye have the light, believe in the light," says Jesus. While the heart is warm and the light is near, lay hold of the light! Confirmation would help you to do this. These questions are put to you: "Do you believe in God the Father? Do you believe in Jesus Christ? Do you believe in the Holy Ghost?" And when you from your heart answer "yes" to these momentous questions, then you have entered into a closer union than ever with the Triune God. Your faith has become more firmly established, it has been confirmed, and you thus become a child of light. The faith of your heart will be seen in your life and you will walk in the light. You would not do anything in darkness that you would be anxious to conceal from the eye of your Saviour. You would walk openly as in the day, a true child of the light. But in order to do this you need to receive grace and strength from on high. You need to fill your soul with the power

of God's holy word, in order to successfully fight the good fight of faith. "Will you, therefore, by the help of God, in watchfulness and prayer, diligently use the Word of God and faithfully seek your Saviour in His Holy Supper?" Surely you will answer "yes" to this question.

He that walks in darkness does not know whither he goes, but a child of light knows. He walks in the foot-steps of the Master and he says: "I go to the Father."

Ever be near our side,
Our Shepherd and our Guide,
Our staff and song:
Jesus, Thou Christ of God,
By Thine enduring Word,
Lead us where Thou hast trod;
Make our faith strong.

Clement of Alexandria.



THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Jesus said:

Take and eat, this is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Luke 22: 19.

Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. Matth. 26: 27, 28.

*W*hen Jesus in his Holy Supper gives you the bread, he says: "This is my body." At the same time, therefore, that you receive the bread, you also receive the body of Christ. When Jesus gives you the cup, he says: "This is my blood." At the same time, therefore, as you receive the cup, you also receive the blood of Christ.

You can see the bread and the wine. They are not the body and blood of the Lord, but are the means by which you receive the invisible and divine gifts of grace. - Jesus himself imparts to you these gifts. He is the host at the Holy Supper; the officiating minister acts but as a servant. In

this sacrament, therefore, you receive Jesus himself, entire, both his body and his blood. You receive the body that was given for you, and the blood that was shed for the remission of your sins. Nor do you here meet the dead, but the living Saviour, for he who was delivered for your offences, arose triumphant from the grave.

The Saviour who thus imparts to you his body and his blood, now sits at the right hand of the Father in glory. There he acts as your advocate, while he is the propitiation for your sins (1 John 2: 1, 2).

Jesus can give to you no more powerful assurance of his love, of the forgiveness of your sins, of the atoning power of his death and resurrection, of his living presence, than when he imparts himself to you in his Holy Supper and becomes one with you.

As the food that we eat is assimilated and becomes one with the body, so Jesus in this sacrament, by giving his body and blood, would permeate your whole being, imparting to you a new life, holy and undefiled. You are thus made partaker of the divine nature (2 Peter 1: 4). "He that eateth me, even he shall live by me" (John 6: 57).

Jesus comes to you in other ways. You hear him speak to you in his Word. He is near to you when you pray. But he never comes nearer to you than in his Holy Supper. There he gives you rich and peculiar blessings, such as peace, righteousness, the forgiveness of your sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

When Jesus comes to you with such heavenly gifts
of grace and infinite love, should you not hasten
to meet him with great gratitude and devotion!

Thy Body for our ransom given,
Thy Blood in mercy shed, —
With this immortal food from heaven,
Lord, let our souls be fed:
And as we round Thine altar kneel,
Help us Thy quickening grace to feel.

Tresilian George Nicholas.



DARE I COME TO THE LORD'S TABLE?

Jesus said:

With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer. Luke 22: 15.

(Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. John 6: 37.)

You would come to the Lord's Table, but your heart is filled with anxious misgivings as to whether that table is prepared for you. You have heard that unworthy guests may come and partake of the Lord's Supper, (eating and drinking damnation to themselves (1 Cor. 11: 29)), and you would not be one of these.

It is true that the Lord's Supper is not meant for all. There are three kinds of persons that the Lord does not invite to his Holy Supper. He does not invite the man who loves sin and would continue to live in the sins from which Jesus came to save him.-- He does not invite the indifferent man, who does not concern himself with his soul's salvation nor with Jesus, the Saviour.— Neither does

he invite the man who is satisfied with himself and does not feel the need of a Saviour. If any such go to Communion, he is a hypocrite, and brings upon himself the wrath of God ~~and condemnation~~.

For whom is the Table of the Lord prepared? Since it is a supper, it is prepared for those who hunger and thirst, and particularly for those who hunger and thirst for the spiritual meat and drink that are given in the Lord's Supper; it is for those who hunger and thirst for Jesus.—You feel that you are not as you should be, that there is much that is unclean and sinful in your heart, but you would be different. You are unhappy and have no peace with God. When you think of God, of your soul, of eternity, you tremble. You sigh in your heart: “O, that I knew where I might find him, my Saviour!” Here, indeed, you find the evidence of spiritual thirst, and Jesus says: “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink” (John 7: 37).

The first disciples of Jesus were not without their faults and sins, and yet Jesus says: “With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you.” If there is an earnest desire in your heart to be saved, a longing for Jesus, you may be assured that he also says unto you: “With desire have I desired to celebrate this Holy Supper with you.” The weakest faith and longing for Jesus is a spark of life, that the Saviour would in no wise quench, but rather strengthen in his Holy Supper.

You fear that Jesus will reject you, but he says:

"Him that cometh unto me I shall in no wise cast out." You feel that you have no worthiness or merit in you, but it is not a question of the holiness you may have to offer the Lord. You may come as you are, a poor sinner, and without money and without price kneel at the Table of the Lord and receive his gifts. He is the giver, you are the recipient. Why should you therefore fear? It is the Lord's Table to which you are invited. He is the same there as elsewhere. You are not afraid to pray to him, to listen to his word. He is not more stern at his Holy Table. There he also receives sinners, is the Friend of sinners, and you may be assured that when you come to him in the garb of a sinner begging for mercy, the word of Jesus will also find application in your heart: "Him that cometh unto me I shall in no wise cast out."

Jesus, this feast receiving.
We Thee unseen adore;
Thy faithful Word believing
We take, and doubt no more;
Give us, Thou true and loving,
On earth to live in Thee
Then, death the veil removing,
Thy glorious face to see!

Ray Palmer.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.

Jesus said: 1921 P.M.

This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. 1 Cor. 11: 25.

~~I~~ It is difficult to understand all that is said of the Holy Supper. It is difficult to believe that I actually receive the body and blood of Jesus. I sometimes doubt that I am a disciple of the Lord, and therefore I am not certain that it is right for me to partake of the Lord's Supper. Your heart is filled with misgivings and deep anxiety, and you think it best to remain away from the Lord's Table.

However, when Jesus says: "Eat, drink, do this in remembrance of me!" do you still think it best not to do what Jesus says?)

Even if you cannot comprehend all that Jesus says concerning his Holy Supper, still if with your whole heart you would fulfill the admonition of Je-

sus, "This do in remembrance of me," then you ought to come to the Table of the Lord.

You must do this in remembrance of Jesus. When you receive the bread, remember, that his body was given for you; when you receive the wine, remember that his blood was shed for you, (for your sins) Jesus would have you remember his death on the cross for you. You think often of Jesus and pray for many things, and this is indeed your God-given privilege. But in these prayers you are apt to think mostly of yourself, of your difficulties and needs. Jesus would have you remember what he has done for you, his sufferings and his death. He would have you remember that it was for you that his body was given and that his blood was shed on Calvary.

When, then, ought you to partake of the Lord's Supper? When other thoughts threaten to drive away the thoughts of Jesus, when you fear that you may forget him, then you ought to come to his Table, that you may be powerfully reminded of him; when you are afraid that the world may gain power over you, then you ought to come to be filled with the love of Jesus; when you feel that you are far from the Saviour, then you should come to gather strength from his living presence; when you feel spiritually weak, come to the Lord's Table and find strength.

We need to remember the precious Saviour! We need to come often to the Lord's Table! (May your first communion not be your last!) The Lord would

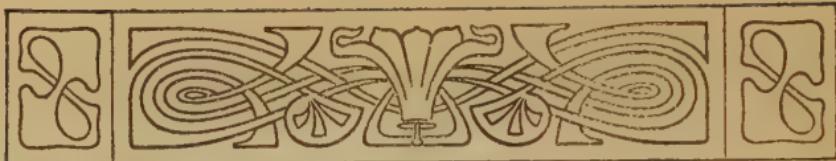
have you come often, because of his great love for you.

A time shall come when the Lord's Supper shall no longer be celebrated by his disciples. When he comes again they will not need to be reminded of him, for they shall see him as he is and possess him. Then they shall partake of the great Supper in heaven, of which the Lord's Supper on the earth was a blessed foretaste. *Shall you not be there?*

According to Thy gracious word,
In meek humility,
This will I do, my dying Lord,
I will remember Thee.

Thy Body, broken for my sake,
My bread from heaven shall be;
Thy testimonial cup I take,
And thus remember Thee.

James Montgomery.



ABIDE IN JESUS!

Jesus said: 1921 A.M.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. John 15: 4, 5.

*Y*ou have come to Jesus. You have come to him every time you have prayed. You come to him when you ~~were~~ confirmed and when you first partook of the Lord's Supper. And now — abide in him!

You should not come to the Lord only from time to time, for then it must be true that you are away from the Lord in the meantime. Abide always in Jesus!

In your confirmation you declared that you ^{would} believe in him, that with your whole heart you would devote your life to him and serve him faith-

fully and honestly. Remember, however, what Jesus says: "Abide in me, for without me ye can do nothing."

You step across the threshold into a world of dangers. "Your adversary, ~~the devil, as a roaring lion~~, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." In ~~your heart~~ there dwells more evil than you are aware of, pride, selfishness, evil lust, falsehood and such like. There are many temptations for you to meet and overcome. Abide, therefore, in Jesus. Keep near to him and to his cross!

Stretch forth your hand to him in humble prayer and supplication! Ask for his guidance and direction through his holy Word! Seek for strength through faith in his holy name! Come frequently to the Lord's Table. Without Jesus you cannot endure! Abide in him!

The branch that abides in the vine, bears fruit. You are in the world to bear ^{fruit} fruit, to accomplish something, to use your talents in the service of the Master. Otherwise yon are useless and superfluous in the world.

The branch that does not bear fruit is hewn down and cast forth. This would seem to be a natural method of procedure, but its aspect becomes terrible when it is applied to us. "Abide in me," says Jesus, "for without me ye can do nothing."

Dear young friends, Jesus has been faithful to you, he was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, that you might live and have life more abundantly. Be faithful unto him, serve him

in love ~~and~~ self-abnegation, and your reward shall be great in heaven. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

All praise and thanks to God
The Father, now be given,
The Son and Him who reigns
With them in highest heaven;
The One eternal God,
Whom earth and heaven adore;
For thus it was, is now,
And shall be evermore!

Martin Rinhart.
Catherine Winkworth.

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